

Youth Shout Out

Leadership Hendricks County 2010 Small Group Project on Youth

Group Members:

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Event:

Youth Shout Out held Sunday, October 24, 2010 from 12 noon to 4:00 p.m. at Hendricks County 4-H Fairgrounds Conference Center in conjunction with Hendricks County Kids Fair

Summary:

This free event targeted youth ages 12-18 and included vendor booths for organizations pertinent to youth to share information and a "shout out" time where panelists made up of experts in various fields could answer questions and discuss topics relevant to teens and pre-teens in Hendricks County.

Leadership Hendricks County 2010 Small Group Project – Youth Shout Out

The focus of our project started with several key issues in mind – youth, community, safety and involvement. Our seven members all have experience with youth, whether it is in our families or our professional life. We wanted to find a way to provide youth in the county with a safe and comfortable format to ask questions and to be heard by adults.

From most of our experiences, younger children seem to have a wide range of mentors in their life and then it falls off for the older kids. That may be due to lose of interest in scouting, sports, church, etc. The adult mentors are still there, but the students no longer stay involved or due to home situations, may not be able to participate in the same manner as before.

We decided on an afternoon event where middle school and high school age students could come and learn about various resources in the county, ask questions of a panel of invited guests and then participate in a safety demonstration. Our talks within the group led us to contact Mark Fairchild, Children's Bureau, and he invited us to piggy back on the Hendricks County Kids Fair, which occurs in the fall at the HC Fairgrounds.

We discussed what resources/vendors to invite who would have a positive impact on the students in the target range. We had a potential vendor list, some were not able to participate this year or we did not get to contact them in a reasonable time. We tried to think outside the box and include vendors who have an interest in youth, but it may not be as evident through their business. This year, we had eleven booths with information and when the students would interact with the vendors, they were able to collect signatures that qualified them for door prizes. The tables and chairs were provided for the vendors, they had to bring only their display and materials to pass out to the students. Most had some give aways and even offered drawings at their individual tables. The vendors were able to set up starting at 10:45 am, with the event starting at 12 noon. Booths were open from 12 noon until 1:30pm. They were able to stay open and visit with youth later, but the Shout Out portion of the program started at 1pm and a couple of the vendors were on the panel.

At 1:30pm, our panel of guests joined at the front of the room, an audience area of about 70 chairs was available, and one of the group members acted as the moderator. The panelists were asked to introduce themselves and explain what areas they interacted with youth. Once introductions were done, the audience was able to ask questions of any of the panelists about anything they wanted to. We had done some previewing of youth and tried to get an idea of the type of questions we might be able to anticipate. That research did help drive who we invited to the panel, as well as professional contacts those of us in the group had.

The Shout Out was scheduled to go from 1:30-3pm. With a larger audience, this would have been an adequate timeframe and many of the questions posed by the youth would have been answered by those on the panel. While planning the event, we had discussions with Youth As Resources personnel, and the Youth Encouraging Philanthropy groups to ask them to encourage attendance by their fellow students and also to give us some seed audience members. Unfortunately, only a couple of the youth were able to attend. They did ask questions and that did help to get others students to ask some questions. A large amount of the time was filled with questions from the moderator to the panel and then the panel asking the audience some questions.

After the panel discussion concluded, we drew for door prizes. We had canvassed various businesses in the county and procured donations from eleven sources. Several of them gave us multiple prizes so we were able to give away 16 different prizes. With this being the first year and very small attendance, almost every person there won a prize. We used the passports the students had signed at the vendor booths for most of the prizes. They had to obtain 5 signatures from vendors and that qualified them to enter the drawing. We had two large ticket items that each student in the audience of the Shout Out got a ticket for and then we drew for those.

After the Shout Out, a local martial arts school teacher came in and did a demonstration on how to use your cell phone to protect yourself during an attack. The participants were partnered up and after explanations were given, they practiced on their partners. This portion of the afternoon lasted about 30 minutes.

The fairgrounds provided us with the classrooms, tables and chairs. We set the room up the way we wanted and then returned the tables and chairs to their original spots at the end of the day. We also had a microphone for the panel discussion. We had several tables at the front of the room with chairs for the panel. The audience area of chairs was set for about 70 and the booths made a horseshoe starting at the back of the audience area and then about 5 tables along the wall, 2 tables at the back of the room. If we had more vendors, there was room for more tables. And the audience area could have been extended into the middle of the vendor area. When students walked into the room at the back, there was a registration table where group members explained the layout, gave each student a passport, and coupons from local vendors.

After the event was over, we had some feedback from youth attendees, vendors and panelists to help with improvements for future events. The date of the Kids Fair was set and we did not have control over that so one of the first problems we ran into was this particular weekend was Fall Break for many of the county schools. Advertising for the event took place mostly through the school announcements. Most schools did promote the event, but realize that most students do not listen to the announcements. Many of the schools did have our flyer posted also. It would be nice to have representatives visit the schools prior to the event and develop some hype. The vendors with storefronts were also asked to display the flyer. If we had made the flyer earlier and distributed it, this would have given more time to promote. Also we needed to get the information to the media so that it was widely publicized.

During the event, music was suggested to give it more of a "fair" type atmosphere. We also received the suggestion to have some type of food at the event. Maybe inviting a vendor who hires youth or does marketing promotions already would be an option. A shorter time frame for the panel was suggested. If the audience was larger, this might not have been a problem. Another suggestion to help with the facilitation of the Shout Out was to have students write down questions on paper and deposit them in a bowl when they arrived. Then the panel could address the questions with the anonymity of the author. If we had collected questions prior to the event, we could even hang placards with topics around the room, this could then stimulate some discussion and questions from the audience.

We discussed having youth on the development committee for the event. Perhaps this would be a good crossover project for YLHC and LHC. Or a group of YAR or YEP students could be brought in to assist the LHC group. Trying to find a weekend that worked for all the participants and then also our target audience is a very big hurdle and so one suggestion was to find a way to take our Shout Out to the schools directly. Perhaps a partnership with the PTO/PTA group in the school districts could be built and then something could be offered during freshman orientation or on a school open house night. This would allow students and parents, in separate groups, to ask some questions and feel like they are being supported and heard within their community. Also, this would be a way to gather more mentors for the students in their own communities.

If there was a way to incorporate "value voting" into the day we could get students and adults to listen to each other and hear what is on their minds. This could be done in either of the formats discussed with the program; an offsite event for the county as a whole, or at the individual schools.

Vendors Present

American Family Insurance
AAA – no rep, just materials
United Way
Youth As Resources
Boy Scouts
Safe Sitter
Children’s Bureau – no rep, just materials
Preparing for Tests and the Future
Army National Guard – Danville
Maurices – Brownsburg
Martial Concepts
Sheltering Wings
Action Pack Karate

Panelists

Jason Winkle – Indiana State University/Martial Concepts
Pat Baldwin – HC prosecutor
Jeff Boles – HC judge
Dave Galloway – HC sheriff
Scott Flood – School Board member
Maria Larrison – Sheltering Wings
Brad Long – Fellowship of Christian Athletes
Christy McIntyre-Craig – Youth As Resources
Britter Matthews-Cook - Ray’s Trash

Potential Vendors

Get REAL inC
Mary Kay/Avon rep
Fitness/gym
Dave Murray – National Center for College Costs
Hendricks College Network
G2G simulator – Purdue Extension
Ameriwork
Exchange Club
Tutoring Club

Potential Panelists

Racing Industry teen driver
Get REAL inC members
Health Care representative
College or Pro sports rep
Bill Sampen – Brownsburg Baseball Academy
HC Parks
Chick Fil A – hiring youth

Door Prizes/Give Aways

Hendricks Regional Health Nursing Administration

Creative Memories

Clarian West

Family Fun and Fitness

Flagstar Bank

State Bank of Lizton

Hendricks Power

Butler Basketball

Best Buy

Susie's Place

Grandpa Jones Popcorn and Candy

McDonalds

Monster Mini Golf

Culvers